

Hunsworth Urban District Council.

Medical Officer's Annual Report For the Year 1911.

To the

Chairman and Councillors for the Hunsworth Urban District.

GENTLEMEN,

It is again the time to submit for your consideration the Annual Report for the year 1911.

The district is a hilly one, and consists of four water sheds with a clay soil. The chief occupation of the inhabitants are the various processes connected with the manufacture of dress goods, coal-mining, and agricultural pursuits.

During the year there were registered in the district 20 births (12 males and 8 females) and 22 deaths (5 males and 17 females), giving, as estimated to the middle of the year, a birth-rate of 14·7 and a death-rate of 16·1 per 1000 of the population, the death-rate including 1 of a resident registered outside the district. The number of infants which died under one year of age was 3, which brings the infant mortality up to 150 per 1000 births registered, a marked increase on the previous year, when the infant mortality was only 86 per 1000 births registered. There were no illegitimate births registered during the year. The various causes of death in the district were as follows:—4 from pneumonia, 2 from broncho-pneumonia, 2 from bronchitis, 1 from cancer, 1 from Bright's disease, 1 from phthisis, 3 from zymotic disease, 1 from other disease of the respiratory organs, 1 from suicide, 1 from an ill-defined disease, and 5 from various other causes.

Eighty-five cases of infectious disease were notified during the year, an increase of 50 over the year 1910. This increase was largely due to an outbreak of measles, which first began amongst children attending the Westgate Hill School in the Bradford area. All contacts were isolated as far as were known, but, notwithstanding, the disease continued to spread so much that I considered it advisable to request the Sanitary Authority to close the East Bierley School from March 16th to April 20th, 1911, inclusive, which procedure was duly reported to you, as well as to the Local Government Board and County Council.

Disinfection of all premises where cases occurred was carried out, as well as disinfection of the School.

The other cases of infectious disease comprised 15 cases of scarlet fever, 2 of erysipelas, and 1 of membranous croup. Thirteen of the scarlet fever cases were removed to the Joint Hospital, where there is ample accommodation, and where they receive every care and attention. All the cases of scarlet fever recovered, but the case of croup and one of the cases of erysipelas died.

The water supplied to the district is leased from the Bradford Corporation, and is good with no plumbo solvent action, and is distributed to all parts of the district, with the exception of Boundary Terrace, Lodge Farm, and one house in Green Lane, which depend

on their supply from wells. On account of the exceptionally dry summer there was naturally a considerable curtailment of supply ; in the earlier part the water being shut off from 6 p.m. to 6 a.m., and in the latter part from 6 p.m. to 9 a.m. Here I may mention that diarrhœa, which was very prevalent all over the country and accounted for many deaths, was scarcely noticeable in the district, and no deaths occurred therefrom. As a precautionary measure I advised you what steps to take to prevent its occurrence, which advice you decided to publish in the local paper as the best means of diffusing the information and most likely to catch the eye of most of the inhabitants, and which was duly carried out.

No complaint of stream pollution in the district has come under my notice, nor that of the Sanitary Inspector.

The drainage of the district, which is a difficult one on account of its physical features, is not yet complete ; Cringles, Hunsworth Lane, and Hunsworth Village still require attention. That which is already done could, I think, be very much improved by means of a proper settling tank for solids at the outfall pipe before it runs on the land for filtration, which is one of the methods adopted for the disposal of the sewage, and the other method being an agreement with the Birkenshaw Urban District Council to take part to treat at their outfall works.

Eleven sink wastes were disconnected during the year, and 11 trapped. Five still need disconnecting, and approximately 55 are still untrapped.

The scavenging of the district is carried out by contract, and removed to the tip in Raiks Lane. But I should advise the Council to do away with all ashplaces, either covered or uncovered, and substitute dust-bins in their place, and also to convert the privies into water closets wherever the drainage will allow ; and I hope that in framing the new bye-laws which are in contemplation that this will be made compulsory, as there are 355 closets in the district, of which 179 are privies with open middens, 113 with covered middens, 17 are pail or tub closets, and 46 are water closets. One privy midden closet has been converted into a water closet during the year.

Five nuisances were reported during the year, of which 3 were remedied, and the other 2 promised to be seen to. There are no offensive trades in the district, such as fish-frying and maggot-breeding.

The school in the district is supplied with pure water from the Council's mains, and the sanitary condition is fair, but the conveniences ought to be converted into water closets. The medical inspection of the children is carried out by the County Education Authority, and I do not interfere unless an epidemic breaks out, when it is my duty to take all care to safeguard the health of the inhabitants ; otherwise, living and visiting daily in the district and practically knowing all the circumstances, when an adverse report is presented to me I generally seek expert advice, the result of which I do not intend to comment on.

The milk supply is in the hands of 21 milk purveyors, and there has been no complaint either with quantity or quality within or without the district.

The cowsheds in the district number 29, and all are in fairly good condition. There are 22 cowkeepers, and 29 on the register. The veterinary inspection of the cows in the district is left in the hands of the M.O.H., who has power to call in assistance when needed.

There has been no call for inspection of unsound food in the district during 1911.

Under the House and Town Planning Act many inspections have been made, and during their course 5 cases of overcrowding, as well as structural defects, were brought before your notice. The cases of overcrowding have all been rectified with the exception of one, which will soon have to move. The structural defects have also been attended to, except 2 which have promised to remedy them. One house of the bungalow type has been erected during the year. On account of the clay nature of the soil I should advise the Council, before any plan of a new building was passed, to insist that each was provided with a damp-proof course in the foundations.

The compulsory notification of Tuberculosis is now in force, but there has been no case reported in the district since. One case, however, occurred before notification was compulsory. As far as was practicable the open-air treatment was adopted, sputa disinfected, etc., but the patient gradually sank and died. Disinfection of everything, even to burning articles of clothing, was carried out. There are, however, no sanatoria to send cases to, and in Urban Districts it would be impossible to erect and uphold them, and the only solution would be for a number to combine and share the cost.

As regards dispensaries in the district, there is no need for them, as the district is well served by means of the charitable institutions in Bradford.

The workshops in the district, of which there are 4, have all been duly inspected and found in a satisfactory condition, as well as the factories, which number 3. No outworkers are attached thereto, and from careful enquiry none are employed by other firms in the district. Therefore, no slips have either been sent or received.

I remain,

Mr. Chairman and Gentlemen,

Yours faithfully,

JOHN BARCLAY.

INGLESIDE,

BIRKENSHAW, NEAR BRADFORD,

February 26th, 1912.

